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THE LIGHT-BEARER.

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WHOLE No. 972

THE MUSIC IN MY HEART.

I've music in my heart, dear love,
And music all day long;
It doth to me a comfort prove,
And makes me blest and strong;
For when at morn you go to work,
You leave a smile behind,
And in that glance a song doth lurk,
To haunt with joy my mind!

O little seems the fond good-by,
And word that then is said,
Yet music's in the smiling eye,
For all the ways I tread;
And just a kiss beside the door,
With word of greeting strong,
Will help the heart of rich or poor,
And give it angel song!

—William Brunton.

The Women Makers of Chains.

"Bright Music in the Hammers, but its Undertone the Dirge of English Womanhood!"

This is the Springfield Republican's heading of a striking article from the London Mail on the life of the women chain-makers of England. It is so graphic and suggestive that we copy it in part:

"The fires of the forges shine from Cradley Heath, from Cradley, from Quarry Bank, from Lye and Stourbridge, and from the rest of the surrounding towns.

"The wind carries to the ear the sound of quick-striking hammers. You will hear the dull hammer-thud as the hammer pounds the metal just soft from the fire. You will hear the hammer-thud getting sharper and sharper, as the metal hardens on the point of the anvil, till in the end the thud has changed to a bright-sounding, ringing blow. And you will hear voices—voices clear and bright of sound. The workers in iron are singing at their anvils. Their voices mingle with the quick blows of the hammers. You hear voices and hammer-blows, and the faint, driving swish of bellows bringing up the heat of the fires. In the air is the sharp, healthful smell of iron.

"You are here in the midst of forges extending out and around for miles and miles. The forge is a fine place. In it are bred men. It brings out to the full the strength and heft and power of the body. And you are here in the country of the forge—where iron is beaten and welded and put into shape. Before you as you walk along the fire of a forge is shining. As you approach, the swish of the bellows loses its faintness, and the blows of the hammers become louder and louder, and the fires become brighter and brighter. And here is the forge and here are the workers. They are women—women making chains.

"Miles and miles of chain. It is made link by link, link by link—and the work goes on from day to day, from week to week, from year to year, from generation to generation. It is as if all the chain of the world was made in this country of smoke and fire and darkness. This black place. This tremen-

dous, far-spreading forge. This vast smithy, wherein women hammer and beat and weld iron. Wherein women forge chains for England. Wherein women forge chains for themselves and their children and for their children's children.

"Link by link. On the work goes. Link by link. Hear the surrounding sound of quick-striking hammers. You hear it from the distance—you hear it from near by—it is behind you—it is before you—it is around you. An all-surrounding, strange sound. A sound that has inclosed within it a curious inner sound. A soul-sound full of sadness and tragedy. It underlies the loud, mingling ring of the hammers. It is beneath the bright, clear, sharp, outer sounds. This mournful soul-sound, it is as a dirge. . . .

"Making chain. Hammering, beating, welding iron all through the day and into the darkness. The forge is a strange place for a mother—the woman.

"Here is an old, bent, gray-haired woman making chain. Her hammer quickly beats and bends the white-hot iron into shape. In a moment she has finished and closed up the weld, and another link is added to the long chain that lies in a heap by the side of the little forge where she is working. She turns to the fire, and as she turns the end of the chain falls on the heap with a dull rattle. With the old, bent, gray-haired woman are working her daughter and granddaughter. Three generations.

"Here in a forge, farther on, is a little boy. He is no more than two years old, and he is sitting upon the cinders within a foot of the fire where his mother is working. The mother keeps an eye on her boy as she works quickly at the anvil. He is too little to be left by himself at home, and so she must keep him here. She must watch him and keep guard over him as she works here at the forge. She must rear him and tend him, and still she must make chain. The little boy is half-asleep as he sits by the glare of the forge. It is near to eight o'clock at night, and it is time that he was in bed. But his mother must still work on.

"Here a girl is working at a forge. Her left hand grasps the handle of the bellows as she blows the fire up to a white heat. She is a good-looking girl, and a young man stands near her, talking to her as she works. One cannot hear what he is saying to her because of the sound from the blows of the hammer, but the light from the forge shines in her face. And the expression of her face tells as plain as words could tell that she is listening to the old story—the beautiful old story that is ever new. He is making love to her. He also makes chain, but he has stopped work some hours before, and he has come to see his girl. She must work on till eight o'clock. After that she will be free to go for a walk with him.

"The wise and good men who make the laws of England have a consideration for the women who make chain. They realize that housework must be done and that children must somehow be looked after, and so they have been generous enough to allow the woman to do a man's work at the forge and at the same time to do a woman's work at home. She can work up to eight o'clock at night.

"The wages a woman can earn at making chain are at the most something less than nine shillings a week. This is her average power of earning. For this she must work at least sixty hours in the week. And she must work as hard as she can the whole time. From morning till night her hammer must go. She must get up very early in the morning, so as to get an hour or so for her housework before she goes to the forge. And then she must work again in the house after eight o'clock at night. It is a life of darkness. And still the women do not know. They sing as they hammer the links of the chain that winds around themselves and their children. But the slave never knows.

"And so the fires of the forges shine from Cradley Heath, from Cradley, from Quarry Bank, from Lye and Stourbridge, and from the rest of the surrounding towns. And the women go on making the links of a great, great chain. They are forging a tremendous, sinister, dark chain in a place of smoke and fire and darkness.

"How the fires of the forges shine! How clear through the distance comes the ring of the bright-sounding hammers!"

The lot of these women is emblematic of that of women everywhere. As a sex they are the victims of a false routine—enslaved by the power of custom and the selfishness and prejudices of society. They accept the apparent necessities of their lives, and help to forge the chains which bind themselves and their sisters. And, strangest of all, they sing as they do so! In this complicity with false conditions they are to be pitied rather than blamed. Women are the industrial "antis" of the human race. In a sense quite opposite to that of Emerson, they "accept the society of their contemporaries and the connection of events." And so the old abuses linger.—*H. H. B. in Woman's Journal.*

Note and Comment.

In No. 970 of *Lucifer* R. B. Kerr hits the nail on the head in regard to H. G. Wells' assumption that it is impracticable to breed for better men and women. Wells has enlisted himself as a champion of all the mental and physical incompetents who, often realizing well enough that they are not fit to have children, nevertheless are slaves to parental instinct, and only want a little pseudo-scientific sophistry to ease their consciences while they indulge their selfishness. Kerr has summed up the matter so clearly and concisely that I will not attempt to add anything further.

In regard to prostitution, definitions seem to differ. George Brown regards the assumed diversion of a physiological function from its original purpose, together with its increase in amount, as prostitution. According to his view, there may be both mutual love and financial independence, but if there has been with the woman a diversion of the physiological function from its original purpose, then the woman is a prostitute. Anybody may define prostitution as he chooses, but if we accept Mr. Brown's definition we must be prepared to admit that the whole course of evolution, from monad to man, has been a grand triumphal march of prostitution. Consider the functions of the monad, then consider the functions of the man that has come from the monad, and you will find that diversion of functions from their original purposes constitutes the entire difference between the two. A more accurate definition of prostitution is the exchange of love or passion for something other than love or passion. According to this definition, Mr. Brown is right in stating that prostitution does not exist outside the human family; but according to his own definition, prostitution exists in all forms of life, and even if he revise his conception of the term to include only diversion of the sexual function, he will find the common fowls of the barnyard perpetual refutations of the limitations he places upon the scope of the term as defined by himself. I suppose Mr. Brown is an imperialist. His view of the status of womankind is strikingly like that of the Republicans toward "the nation's wards," the Filipinos—a shameless and immoral sex, that some day we may be able to lift to a higher plane. Mr. Brown must not blush at the idea of Trilby

posing nude before male artists. When beauty is combined with nudity, shame is the last sensation he should feel. Then, too, shame, like some other unpleasant maladies, is catching. Trilby caught it from Little Billie, and here in America we have constantly to guard against catching it from Comstock. If Mr. Brown is infected, he should not expose others to danger. In Boston male models stand naked before women's classes in art, and, shameful as it may appear, every one is too earnestly engaged in work to waste time on male Trilbys or female Little Billies. It appears not to have occurred to Mr. Brown that the rule of shame, like that of sex, ought to work both ways.

Carrie Austin says: "In the earlier stages of man's evolution he thought little of the marriage tie, but the inherited impulse was within him to be eventually recognized and ultimately actualized in a perfected marriage bond." I do not quite understand about this "inherited impulse." It has always been my idea that inherited impulses must be possessed by ancestors of nearer or further degree, as a condition of inheritance. If this impulse was lacking in the earlier stages of man's evolution it is difficult to see how it could be "inherited" by later generations. To me, a strictly materialistic explanation of the origin of the marriage tie is more satisfactory. The marriage tie arose gradually, like many other social concepts, as the result of various causes and to accomplish certain ends. Upon the side of the male, the main object of the institution was to prevent the woman from running away when the love-relation no longer satisfied her. Upon the side of the female, the central feature was to prevent the man from ceasing to provide her with food, clothing and lodging when the love-relation no longer satisfied him. Each thought it an advantage to be able to hold the other when love no longer satisfied, and so each appealed to the aid of society, through the marriage bond, to enforce their respective claims. History shows that it is hard to tell which got the worst of the bargain.

Wellesley Hills, Mass.

ALEX E. WIGHT.

Heredity.

There is no end to what is said about heredity, and there is no bottom to our ignorance of the subject. We hear constantly of what can be done by scientific breeding; race horses, sporting dogs, fat hogs and long-wooled sheep are held up as examples, and it is implied that the same methods applied to human reproduction would yield like desirable results.

There are reasons for believing this assumption to be a mistaken one. In the first place, animal heredity is much simpler than human, and it is much easier to take account of the factors that make up the problem. The object of the breeder is to improve the animal physically, and the intellectual and psychic factors, while present of course, do not interest him so much. In the race-horse it is speed he looks for, and this he obtains at the expense of some other qualities, as strength and endurance; and while he gets speed, the animal is not improved all around. The highly bred animal is less able to take care of itself than is the one that has not been so improved. The improvement is in all cases for the service of an alien species and is of no value to the animal itself.

Take the pointer dog. His ability to point is not only of no use to himself, but it actually unfits him to survive except he be taken care of by man. Thus all improvement made in the breeds of animals is for the benefit of man and to the detriment of the animal itself.

Again the gain is not brought about by the dog or horse itself but by a superior intelligence acting on an inferior, and always at the expense of the inferior's freedom of expression. When breeding animals man creates or adjusts their environment and they are entirely subject to his management. In the most effective way he denies them choice of partners or of seasons; he is compelled to do so, for all animals would revert to a common type again if left to themselves, and this type would be determined by influence for the most part outside themselves.

If it is proposed to improve the breed of men in this lop-sided

way, there may be some wisdom in applying cattle-breeding methods to him, but as the object is rather to produce fully rounded personalities, with fixity and strength of character and purpose, it may properly be called "rot." And this even though it was sure to succeed, which it is not; for other factors, not new indeed, but in different combinations, have to be taken more into account. For while in the case of animals the intellectual and psychic factors play a small part, in the case of men they almost dominate the physical. We have men and women with poorly developed bodies who have commanding intellectual and psychic powers, and these are much more useful and desirable qualities than any amount of mere muscle. I need only mention instances like Napoleon, Newton and Moses Mendelssohn.

I think that mere physical factors have less share in determining choice now than in earlier periods, partly because we dress differently and are able to make good any deficiency by padding and other devices of the tailor and dressmaker. A woman may be smitten by a pair of padded shoulders, just as a man may fall in love with one or other of those protuberances which women so much affect. At any rate, if selection is passing from the physical to the psychic and intellectual stage, then it will become increasingly difficult to determine beforehand what the outcome of any union will be, and the uselessness of any scientific or authoritative interference will become more and more apparent.

Then as to scientific breeding of human kind there is one objection that is conclusive, and that is that it would require the submission of men and women to some directing authority which would not only have power to advise but also to enforce its decisions. This is the most grotesque idea that ever entered the mind of man, and is not matter for refutation, but only for plain statement. That some scientific or political board should round us up, look us over, and decide which should breed and which should not! As with horses and hogs and dogs, so with men and women—the herdsman, the gentleman farmer, the amateur breeder are to isolate us, feed us on scientific food, select the mates and seasons for breeding. There might be some complaint by the rejected—best therefore to castrate the males and spay the females and make a scientific job of it.

I beg leave to enter a mild protest against any one being empowered to manage these matters for me.

GEORGE BROWN.

Woman's Duties.

Lizzie M. Holmes' article, "A Free Woman's Duties," in *Lucifer* No. 969, I enjoyed very much. It will take many men a long time to get over the bad habit of telling women what they ought to do. Reading that article of Lizzie M. Holmes' reminded me of an article written by Benj. R. Tucker several years ago, and published in *Liberty*. I had a number of typewritten copies taken of that article. I inclose one of these copies, and when you have the space to spare in *Lucifer* please reprint it. Your friend,

CORNELIA BROECKLIN.

Thanking our good friend and helper we freely and gladly comply. Here is the typewritten article:

"The London Truth thinks that 'the best use to which a woman can be put is to be made the honest wife of some good man and the judicious mother of healthy children.' It is high time that Editor Labouchere, who claims to be a radical, found out that woman is not here to 'be put' to any use whatever. Like man, she has her capacities and her preferences, and like him, she also has the right to PUT HERSELF to the uses most in accordance with them. Propagation is an important function in which man and woman are factors equally necessary, but one whose usefulness is entirely incident and subordinate to the rest of life. Its value depends wholly upon its power to produce human beings good for something more than the perpetuation of the race. The man who should be told that the best use to which he could be put would be to be made the honest husband of some good woman and the judicious father of healthy children would consider himself insulted, and with reason. Why should not woman, too, feel the insult of being degraded in others' estimation to the level of a mere sexual animal, with no brain to speak of above her cerebellum?"

The Rights of Women.

Not her right to the ballot, for the Anarchist knows that balloting for a change of rulers can never benefit us as a people. To be useful a thing must be helpful, and the history of the world teaches us that the State is an incumbrance to civilization; laws are a restraint on society; bayonets a barrier to to progress.

Observe this: In all countries the many are ruled by the few. The few make laws to benefit themselves, and they enforce them as far as possible. The ballot in the hands of those who can be deceived with the idea that they are the ruling power is a delusion and a snare. Women have the same right in council as men, and it makes us smile to read a noted politician's words: "We doubt the advisability of turning angels into hell to purify its atmosphere."

Of course, Mr. R., you use the words "angels" and "hell" metaphorically, but if you mean that women should keep out of hell (politics) you are certainly wrong, for we are already in there.

We suffer from the vicious management, the almost infernal administration of man-made laws. We bring children into the world knowing they must undergo the same or worse. We see our lawmakers making all sorts of preparations for war, and know that our sons will be called upon to kill or be killed by their fellow men. Seeing, feeling, knowing all these things, it is not human nature to sit idly by and not try to help make the conditions better.

We have been called angels long enough. We have come to think some other name more applicable to beings who toil sixteen hours a day for a bare living, or to one who pays taxes to support a government which practically places her with idiots, criminals and the insane. Angels are supposed to have nothing to do except to look pretty or perhaps sing, with accompaniment by a golden harp.

We do not need more laws, but to abolish all we have and live in voluntary association in which both sexes would enjoy complete freedom. Fanny Fern, in speaking of the Pilgrim Mothers of New England, said: "They had to endure all that the Pilgrim Fathers endured and the Pilgrim Fathers besides."

So it is with us. We have to live under the laws, and with the men who make the laws.

MYRA PEPPER.

The Gospel of Emerson.

In many cities the hundredth anniversary of Emerson's birth was celebrated on Monday, May 25. Many preachers took Emerson for their text on Sunday preceding this anniversary. The occasion seems to call for restatement of some of Emerson's noted sayings. Here are a few taken from his essay on "Self-Reliance":

For non conformity the world whips you with its displeasure. Society everywhere is in conspiracy against the manhood of every one of its members.

Society is a joint stock company, in which the members agree, for the better securing of his bread to each shareholder, to surrender the liberty and culture of the eater.

The virtue in most request is conformity. Self-reliance is its aversion. It loves not realities and creators, but names and customs.

Trust thyself; every heart vibrates to that iron string.

The other terror that scares us from self-trust is our consistency.

A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines.

With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. He may as well concern himself with his shadow on the wall.

Out upon your guarded lips! Sew them up with packthread, do. Else if you would be a man, speak what you think today in words as hard as cannon balls, and tomorrow speak what tomorrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict everything you said today.

I hope in these days we have heard the last of conformity and consistency. Let the words be gazetted and ridiculous henceforward.

High be his heart, faithful his will, clear his sight, that he may in good earnest be doctrine, society, law to himself, that a simple purpose may be to him as iron necessity is to others.

Lucifer, the Lightbearer

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Lucifer—Its Meaning and Purpose.

LUCIFER—The planet Venus; so called from its brightness.—*Webster's Dictionary.*

LUCIFEROUS—Giving Light; affording light or the means of discovery.—*Same.*

LUCIFIC—Producing Light.—*Same.*

LUCIFORM—Having the form of Light.—*Same.*

The name Lucifer means Light-Bringing or Light-Bearing, and the paper that has adopted this name stands for Light against Darkness—for Reason against Superstition—for Science against Tradition—for Investigation and Enlightenment against Credulity and Ignorance—for Liberty against Slavery—for Justice against Privilege.

The Curse of Great Men—Their Errors.

Such is the heading of a leading editorial by Thaddeus B. Wakeman in his paper, the Torch of Reason, Kansas City, Mo., dated May 21, E. M. 303 (1903). In compliance with his letter printed in last week's Lucifer this editorial on "The Curse of Great Men" is herewith given entire:

"'Call no man master,' says Dr. Roberts—and it is well to say, but how are you to help it? If you are not able and complete enough to 'go it alone,' what other way is so good as to tie on to some one who is? Until Science came, and that was only 'yesterday,' there was no other way. Under Theology and Metaphysics there could be, and is now, only an authority, a one-man government. It was the pope or priest who knew the will of God and his word; or the magician, sage or wise one who knew the spirit-essence and wisdom of things by a higher intuition or skill. There was nothing to do but to make masters of those superior people who had superior beings or exclusive wisdom back of them. That means that until Science came the masses were RELIGIOUS, and so mental, and so moral, and so economic, and so political SLAVES. Now, by the help of Science, Paine and Jefferson, we have taken up the attempt at political freedom and are trying to work back to religious emancipation, which will result in enabling us to say, 'I call no man Master!'—and that ONLY will do it!

"The reason that will do it is that Science discovers and makes us FREE heirs and owners of the INFINITE and ALMIGHTY UNIVERSE. We cannot be glad enough when we realize the fact. No bounds to our (my) universe and no god to make it a slave-pen. There is no mystery or mysteries about it! No spirits or spooks, 'principles' or angels—except the limitations and obfuscations of our own minds. There are only things, FACTS, and the PROCESSES and ORDER thereof, which we call 'laws' or Truths—i. e., what we may TRUST to. This being so, and being discovered, THEN only is it possible for us to be free! That is the only 'Truth that sets us free,' and justifies an almighty Fourth of July. This scientific truth is a MODERN discovery or invention. The old, the Bible folks had no true idea of Truth, and really knew nothing about it—except as the Greeks guessed. WE and TRUTH being thus FREE, can now 'get together,' without Masters or Gods of any kind. We don't have to ask them to grant us their 'say' as Truth, or to take their authority. We have tested truth as authority, never authority as truth.

"But the old Bible habit clings to most of us—a great man is great every way—for is he not inspired or specially gifted by God or spirit to know or do so much? Instead of TESTING his truth and taking ONLY that, they swallow the man whole—errors and all! It is this old Theological, Bible, Metaphysical habit that makes the errors of great men such an awful curse to the human race. For their good is made to force their bad on us. Seldom can one man get hold of but a little that is really true and good; but to get that we have to be cursed with all of his errors, nonsense and limitations. So it has been with 'gods' and men: Jehovah, Christ, Paul, Mohammed, Swedenborg and J. Smith. Nor less with the humans: the Greeks, Romans, the moderns: Aristotle, Caesar, Charlemagne, and also our scientists: Newton, Comte, Spencer and even KARL MARX!

"TEST IT! What is True? What is Good? What is Beautiful? For that, pay and infinite gratitude—but mastership never!

In order to do complete justice to our Kansas City contemporary I print his editorial just as it appears in the Torch—capitals and all. That there is much in this quoted article with which I am in full accord is freely and gladly granted. The chief point of difference between Brother Wakeman and myself is in the use of the word science—the assumption on his part that we are now living in an era of Science, spelled with a big S, just as the theologian spells his God with a big G,—instead of living in the DAWN of the scientific era, as I think.

Science means knowledge, or, as some define it, "knowledge systematized," and made available for use. But science is progressive and therefore changeable.

What is received as science today is very liable to be discredited as such tomorrow.

Leaving out of the question a few abstractions, of comparatively little worth to any one—except perhaps to the classes which rob and enslave their less "scientific," less cunning and covetous neighbors—there is no absolute science, there are no unchangeable truths.

That which men wrangle over as truth is relative; not positive, not absolute, not eternal or unchangeable. It all depends upon the point of view.

To speak of "Science" as an ENTITY, as Brother Wakeman seems to do; as a self-existent and all-powerful actor, factor, creator or redeemer of men, is to use a metaphor, a figure of speech, an abstraction, scarcely less fanciful or less mischievous than are the personifications called God, Jehovah, Satan, Society, Government, Law, etc., etc.

To speak of an "Infinite and Almighty Universe," an "almighty Fourth of July," of "infinite gratitude," etc., quoting the Torch of Reason, appears to me to be simply a revamping of the old, old personal God idea, a renaissance of the old slavish idea that Government, Law, is something separate from, above and beyond the people, the common people, who are supposed to be created simply that they may be governed; which idea involves also the duty of grateful, filial, unquestioning submission to a paternal power—the personified State, Government, Law—in a word, God.

"GREAT IS ALLAH! AND MOHAMMED IS HIS PROPHET."

The mental concept called God has been the direct cause of much of the hate, the persecution, the wars, murders and miseries of mankind, as we all know. This need not and would not have been if each had been allowed to make his own god and worship it in his own way. But love of power seems innate in the human mind; hence arose "prophets" who claimed to know more about the unseen and unknown than did their fellow human beings, and because of this assumed superior knowledge they and their followers in all ages have tried to compel others to accept their peculiar brand of the god-idea.

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Is there not great danger that much the same thing is now to happen with what we call Science? Brother Wakeman talks of science in the same way that the Christian or Mohammedan talks of his god. Does he aspire to be the authoritative spokesman for science, as Mohammed claimed to speak for Allah, and as the Pope of Rome now claims to speak for his god, Jehovah?

Is there to be a prophet of a new dispensation—the scientific dispensation, or era?

Brother Wakeman claims to be a Positivist in science and religion. In his lectures to which I have listened he speaks with as much assurance that he knows the limitations of science, of nature, as does the most bigoted theologian when speaking of the fundamentals of his creed.

WAKEMAN OR INGERSOLL?

In the new Liberal University that is being established by the friends of Freethought at Kansas City, Mo., and of which Brother Wakeman is now president, there is to be an "Ingersoll Chair," an Ingersoll professorship. Funds are being collected not only to endow the university on a plan quite similar to that of the sectarian universities of the country, but also to endow a

particular professorship to be called by the name of the great American Agnostic orator.

Does this mean that Ingersoll is to be the patron saint of the new university, the prophet of science and Freethought, and that the professors must teach only such doctrines as those taught in the authorized editions of Ingersoll's works?

And since Ingersoll, like all other great men, is not always consistent with himself, will this fact not require an authoritative expounder, one who can tell us exactly what Ingersoll meant and what he did not mean?

And will not this necessity for an authoritative interpreter of what Ingersoll taught, and what Science teaches, give rise to endless dissensions, to schisms, persecutions, hate and wars, just as has happened in the case of the various "prophets of God"?

Wakeman says Science will make us free. So likewise the religious teachers iterate and reiterate that the "Truth will make you free"—meaning of course their own particular brand of truth, and when Wakeman says, "No spooks, 'principles' or angels except the limitations and obfuscations of our own minds," he seems to be giving us to understand that there is no truth, no science, outside of the materialistic cult, the "positive" philosophy, with which he and Ingersoll are identified.

Yes, yes; "the old Bible habit clings to most of us—a great man is great in every way, for is he not inspired by God or spirit to know or do so much?" Brother Wakeman mentions a number of instances of great men being "swallowed whole"—Christ, Paul, Mohammed, Aristotle, Newton, Comte, Spencer, et al., and "even Carl Marx." Why not add Ingersoll? Is not Ingersoll's name equal in fame to that of Marx?

I am glad, however, that our positivist brother protests against "swallowing a man whole—errors and all"; hence I shall watch with interest the evolution of the Liberal University, of which he is the president and at present the chief spokesman.

M. HARMAN.

On the Picket Line.

"Postoffice Scandals" occupy just now a large space in the public prints. Large promises are made that "no guilty man shall escape," meaning that none shall escape punishment if found guilty of complicity in the acknowledged robberies of the postoffice department of the falsely called people's government. Patrick Henry said he knew no guide for his feet but the lamp of experience. Guided by this lamp we are safe in saying that the most guilty offenders connected with postoffice crookedness will not be punished—not even by dismissal from office. The worst of all robberies suffered by the people through the connivance of the post office officials is the "bounty," the "graft," the "boodle," that is paid to the railroad magnates for carrying mails, by which crookedness many hundreds of thousands of dollars are paid into the coffers of the railways, every year, that would not be paid if the contracts for carrying the mails were made and enforced on principles of common business honesty and fairness. These high-handed robberies of the people's pockets have been exposed so often, all to no purpose, that those who read the scare-heads in the papers concerning later postoffice scandals, have reason to cry out, in the language of the street, "O, Rats!"

Another of the sensational headings in the great dailies is that about Rockefeller and the banks, namely, that the Standard Oil magnate now proposes to control, in his own interests, the money market of the country as he now controls the kerosene market to his own interest. That this can be done under the law-restricted supply of legal tender currency—under the regime of a gold standard currency, is nothing new. The only new feature is that the bankers of the country, as well as the common people, are to be made the victims of the artificial scarcity of money, that is, victims of a financial scare whenever it suits the whim of the billionaire Octopus, with a few scratches of his pen, to produce such scare.

Whether the Republican party managers can persuade the said Octopus to postpone his financial squeeze till they can get

another four year's lease on the governmental farm, remains to be seen.

And still another fruitful theme for the newspapers that live and grow fat on sensationalism is the slaughter of Jews by their fellow-religionists, the Russians. I say fellow-religionists, for they all worship the same god and use the same book—in part, at least—as their bible, or book of sacred records. Christianity is simply a reformed or evolved Judaism; Jesus and his apostles were all Jews. Why, then, cannot they live together in peace?

The answer seems to be, as stated in another article in this issue, that the prophets of Judaism and of Christianity do not agree in matters of detail. The Jews want but one god, Jehovah, while Christians want three—Jehovah, Jesus and Holy Ghost; perhaps we should say the largest division of Christians want a fourth divinity, "Holy Mary, Mother of God."

A noted writer once said, "Nothing ever hated like religion," and this new religious outbreak seems only a fresh illustration of the truth of that saying.

Would a religion based on "science" be more tolerant, more humane, than those founded on myth and fable? M. H.

Appalling Calamities.

Last year the civilized world was horrified by reports of death and devastation by floods of lava emitted from craters of volcanoes in the West Indies. These almost unparalleled disasters were followed by great floods of water in many sections of the United States and elsewhere involving immense damage to crops, and causing the loss of many lives. Now the press dispatches from the great Middle West bring news of greater loss of life and property than ever before known in that part of the country, caused by overflow of the Kaw river and other streams tributary to the Missouri and Mississippi.

The greatest destruction of life is at North Topeka, Kansas, a city of fifteen thousand people, nearly all of which was destroyed by flood and fire; the number of lives lost being estimated at from 170 to 250; loss of property estimated at four millions. At Kansas City from fifteen to fifty lives are reported lost, with an estimated destruction of six millions worth of property. At other points in Kansas, Missouri, Iowa and Indian Territory many deaths and great destruction of property are reported, including many millions of dollars to farmers and to railways.

At this writing—Monday morning, June 1, the reports are too meager to be very satisfactory, but enough is reasonably certain to justify the statement that no such disaster was ever before seen in the great Middle West since settled by the Caucasian race.

M. H.

Books Received.

"The Root of All Kinds of Evil," by Rev. Stewart Sheldon, Chicago. Chas. H. Kerr and company. Price ten cents.

"The Republic of Plato." Book third; translated by Alexander Kerr, Chicago; Chas. H. Kerr and company. Price fifteen cents.

"God's Children—A Modern Allegory," by James Allman, Chicago; Chas. B. Kerr and Company. Handsomely bound in red cloth, price fifty cents.

"The True Science of Living—The New Gospel of Health—Practical and Physiological." By Edward Hooker Dewey, M. D. Introduction by George F. Pentecost, D. D. Published by Chas. C. Haskell and Son, Norwich, Conn., and by L. N. Fowler and company, London, England.

This is a book of 323 large pages, very superior paper, type and binding, "for physicians and laymen," price, linen binding \$2.25; buckram \$2.50.

From lack of time and physical strength I have not given these books and booklets the careful examination necessary to

justify a critical opinion of their worth, but hope to make selections soon from their pages, that will enable our readers to judge for themselves as to their respective values. Other books and pamphlets will be noticed as space and time permit.

"A New Religion," by C. P. W. Longdille, Auckland, New Zealand. For circulation among adults only. Price one shilling sixpence. The Author says in his preface:

"The object of this little work is to outline the basis of sexual morality, and to show how the sexual instincts can be brought into harmony with the wants of a highly civilized humanity, by establishing an entirely new system of marriage, based upon and in accordance with the laws of our nature."

M. H.

To Michigan Women.

Some time ago Melvin A. Root, a lawyer of Bay City, compiled and had published the little book named "The Legal Condition of Women and Girls in Michigan."

He did this believing that women should know their legal standing. This book is sold for ten cents and has in it the answers to dozens of questions pertaining to property matters, any one of which, if the information was asked from a local lawyer, the person asking would be expected to pay for at lawyer's prices.

One lady, when returning the book, which she had borrowed of me to read, said: "It makes me ashamed that I am a woman!" The reply to her was: "I would be ashamed to be a man and make such laws for women."

No woman should be without one of these and no girl should enter the marriage relation without first knowing all the book contains.

Send ten cents for one to Melvin A. Root, 1209 Fifth avenue, Bay City, Mich., and do so soon, for the edition is nearly sold and he may not put out another.

B. B. R.

VARIOUS VOICES.

E. M. Dewey, Oakland, Calif.:—Have just been reading your article, "The Outlook for Freethought and Free Speech in America." It only expresses the views I held when I lived in Washington, D. C., in 1853-4—"Know-Nothing" times, when a Know-Nothing Mayor (Tower) was elected, and the Washington Monument was being erected. I observe the same thing going on in this place, in San Francisco, Sacramento, and other large centers in this state [municipal control passing into the hands of the Roman Catholics]. But there are contra forces working also—unseen and equally powerful forces, probably. I hope you and I may weather the approaching gale and live to see its effects on the world.

Ed. W. Chamberlain, N. Y.:—Don't you ever be afraid that I will not read all of Lucifer. No paper is so welcome or so eagerly read as Lucifer, when it comes on its weekly visit. I cannot forget the old times when my sympathies went out to Lucifer and its noble editor during the long struggle with the postoffice blackmailers. What a hard time the Postmaster General is having today to cover up the rascalities of the blackmail bureau and to divert public attention from its infamies. The public is too well informed for the Postmaster General's whitewash to do much good. It would be better in result and more commendable in motive if he were to call upon all the victims of the blackmailers to tell their stories and with the force of the testimony that could be elicited dismiss the rascally incumbents and close the blackmail bureau forever.

L. V. Pinney, Winsted, Conn.:—I inclose a dollar subscription to Lucifer, which continues to diffuse more light to the square inch than any other luminary in the market. But you should have a "fat contributor"—one who does not take to reform with such everlasting seriousness. Admit that the world deserves to be scolded at and preached at, but know also that there are occasions when it should be laughed at; and if the

grim gladiators see nothing in the world to laugh at, let them some time take a day off and look at each other. Reform need not always wear the melancholy look of one about to have a tooth extracted; nor the lean and hungry look of Cassius; nor the wrathful attitude of a woman cleaning house; nor yet the monstrous profundity of the preacher ready to "bust" into utterance about Christ and Him Crucified. Is there then no laughing "child among ye taking notes?"

J. B. E., Philadelphia, Pa.:—Inclosed find 25 cents for extras. I send you some papers containing cartoons on the Press Muzzler, which I think you will appreciate—the blue law crusade, the increase of salaries of chaplains from three to six dollars per prayer for aid from the throne of grace, etc. I also send lists of large and liberal donations—by the Legislature—to religious institutions, etc. The press of the country is pouring these cartoons and criticisms into the office of the North American. I hope you will add yours in Lucifer. I was particularly interested in your editorial on the decadence of Liberalism since the convention—in this city—in 1876. There was a time when the Liberal League of this city maintained a free platform; when speakers were given a hearing on all subjects and had large audiences, and when Liberal literature had a large sale. Today in this city Paine anniversaries are a thing of the past. Just think! Philadelphia, the city of Paine's literary triumphs, and where the Declaration of Independence was signed.

[While there is much to discourage the optimistic Freethinker—the logical, the radical Freethinker—in this report of Brother J. B. E., it is pleasant to remember that it is always "darkest just before the dawn." The late legislation in Pennsylvania against freedom of the press—the "Press Muzzler," as it is called by our correspondent—is rousing a storm of protest all over the country, that may result in a new convention of Liberals in Philadelphia and in a new declaration of independence. M. H.]

We will speak out, we will be heard,
Though all earth's systems crack;
We will not bate a single word,
Nor take a letter back.
Let liars fear, let cowards shrink,
Let traitors turn away;
Whatever we have dared to think
That dare we also say.

—James R. Lowell.

The sex superstition is so thoroughly a part of our being that we refuse to discuss it or endeavor to remove it, though evidences of its miserable results are as common and conspicuous as can be, everywhere. Even many libertarians shrink from putting their ideas to the test in this respect and hang back with ill-concealed dismay, advising that the problem of sex relations be left to settle itself when the economic question is settled. If these individuals will tell us how the economic question can be settled while woman holds her present status in society, and is dominated by the ideas which she labors under as under a heavy cross, it will be more to the purpose than red faces and angry and incoherent protests can.—W. F. Barnard in *Free Society*.

John Mitchell told a story recently in the Clover Club of Philadelphia which was of a certain grim humor. Mr. Mitchell was talking about the seriousness of life, and said there were two sisters, seamstresses, who lived in a little room and earned their bread by sewing. They were young and pretty, but they seldom laughed; they never wore comely clothes; they did nothing but sit in a stooped attitude sewing all day and a good part of the evening. One night, when she was quite worn out with labor, the younger said to the older sister:

"Oh, dear! I wish we were both dead."

The older sister's mouth took on a grim smile as she returned:

"Be still and work hard. Business before pleasure."—Ex.

The Chicago Society of Anthropology has adjourned till the first Sunday in October.

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